President's Statement On Guantanamo Dispute

Here is President Johnson's statement yesterday on the Guantanamo Base situation:

When the Cuban government shut off the water supply to Guantanamo it deliberately broke an agreement made in 1938, reasserted in 1947 and personally supported by Fidel Castro in 1958. The United States is determined to guarantee the security of the Guantanamo Naval Base and does not intend to submit that security or the welfare of the servicemen and theirf amilies who live there to further irresponsible actions of the Cuban government. The President has instructed the Departtment of Defense to make the Guantanamo base self-sufficient. In response, the Secretary of Defense has issued instructions to: 1. Assure the base control over its own water supplies both by conversion of sea water to fresh water and by the transportation of water by ship. 2. Reduce the employment of Cuban personnel who are subject to the control of the Cuban government and whose wages contribute to its foreign exchange.

The reckless and irresponsible conduct of the Cuban government remains a constant threat to the peace of this hemisphere. The consequences off urther provocations by Castro should be carefully weighed by all nations.

These matters are being called to the attention of the members of the OAS for consideration in connection with charges now pending against Cuba in that organization. They will also be discussed with the members of NATO in order that those governments can take them into account in connection with their determination of their own policies towards the threats to the security of the Western Hemisphere posed by the Castro regime."